

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15

COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 /077 W

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R 300130Z APR 75

FM AMCONSUL SAPPORO

TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 278

UNCLAS SAPPORO 20

E.O. 11652; N/A

TAGS: MARR, JA, US,

SUBJECT: PRESS COVERAGE OF ANNOUNCEMENT OF CHITOSE BASE RIF.

1. HOKKAIDO SHINBUN AND THE HOKKAIDO EDITIONS OF ASAHI AND YOMIURI NEWSPAPERS, IN THE SATURDAY AFTERNOON APRIL 26 EDITIONS GAVE FRONT PAGE COVERAGE TO THE ANNOUNCED RIF OF 83 JAPANESE EMPLOYEES AT CHITOSE BASE AND THE SPENSION OF OTH FUNCTIONS.

2. HOKKAIDO SHINBUN HEADLINE "CHITOSE OTH HAS SUSPENDED FUNCTIONS AND ALL JAPANESE EMPLOYEES WILL BE LAID OFF: BASE CLOSURE NOT TOUCHED UPON," THE NEWSPAPER GAVE DETAILED COVERAGE TO THE HISTORY OF THE BASE AND AN ANALYSIS OF THE LABOR FORCE AFFECTED BY THE RIF. ACCORDING TO THE PAPER, THE MEDIAN AGE OF THE 83 EMPLOYEES IS 49 FOR MEN AND 34 FOR WOMEN. THE 83 INCLUDE 58 SKILLED WORKERS SUCH AS BOILERMEN. ELECTRICIANS, DRIVERS, COOKS, ETC., 20 OFFICE WORKERS, AND 5 GUARDS AND FIREMEN. FIFTY PERCENT HAVE BEEN EMPLOYED LESS THAN FIVE YEARS AND THEIR INCOME AVERAGES 140,000 YEN PER MONTH. ACCORDING TO THE PAPER, JAPANESE EMPLOYEES TOTALED NEARLY 3,000 IN THE PEAK YEARS OF 1952 AND 1953, AND THERE WERE ALMOST 11,000 AMERICANS. THE PAPER OBSERVED THAT THIS RIF LEAVES ONLY TWO JAPANESE EMPLOYEES OF THE USFJ IN HOKKAIDO-AT LORAN STATION.

3. YOMIURI STATED THAT IT HAD BEEN "SUSPECTED THAT THE OPERATION  
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OF OTH HAD STOPPED ABOUT THE MIDDLE OF MARCH, BUT THIS WAS THE

FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT THAT WAS MADE BY THE U.S. FORCES AUTHORITIES. THE U.S. AIR FORCE AUTHORITIES DID NOT CLARIFY THE DATE AND REASONS FOR THE CLOSING OF THE FUNCTION AND HAVE MADE NO COMMENTS AS TO WHETHER OF NOT THE BASE WILL BE CLOSED, SAYING THAT THIS IS A MATTER TO BE TAKEN UP BY THE U.S.-JAPAN JOINT COMMITTEE." THE CHIEF OF HOKKAIDO CHAPTER OF ALL JAPAN GARRISON FORCES EMPLOYEES UNION WAS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT "WE DO NOT OPPOSE THE WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. FORCES AND THE BASE, BUT WOULD STRONGLY REQUEST REMEDIES BE TAKEN FOR EMPLOYEES'S DAILY LIFE. THIS ANNOUNCEMENT HAS BEEN MADE DURING AN ECONOMIC DEPRESSION AND WE WOULD ASK FOR RE-EMPLOYMENT, EXEMPTION FROM VARIOUS TAXES, AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN EMPLOYMENT COUNTERMEASURE OFFICE."

4. ASAHI SHINBUN HAD A SIMILAR ARTICLE WITH THE HEADLINE, "CURTAIN DROPS ON THIRTY YEAR CHITOSE BASE." THE ARTICLE ADDED THAT THE VAST BASE LAND IS EQUIPPED WITH COMMUNICATION FACILITIES AND THAT OTHER FACILITIES STILL REMAIN. FUTURE MANAGEMENT AND WITHDRAWAL OF SUCH FACILITIES MIGHT BECOME A PROBLEM." ASAHI STATED WITHOUT ATTRIBUTION THAT THE BASE WOULD BE CLOSED.

5. ALL ARTICLES GAVE PROMINENT PLAY TO THE PREFECTURAL GOVERNMENT REQUEST THROUGH THE DEFENSE FACILITIES AGENCY THAT USFJ HONOR THE U.S.-JAPAN UNDERSTANDING FOR THE ISSUANCE OF NINETY DAYS' ADVANCE NOTICE, RATHER THAN THE SIXTY-SIX DAYS OF THE RIF NOTICE. ECTON

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